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ENZI SETS SERIES OF HEARINGS TO REVIEW DRUG SAFETY, IMPORTATION,  
COST SAVINGS, FDA'S APPROVAL PROCESS,

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee (HELP Committee), today announced a series of five hearings that will focus on prescription drug safety, drug importation and costs as well as the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) drug approval process.

The series is scheduled to begin February 16 with the first two hearings focused on drug safety and importation.

"It is critical that we maintain public confidence in the FDA's ability to protect the public health," Enzi said Friday. "By holding this series of oversight hearings, I believe the HELP Committee will develop a better understanding of how the FDA does its business and what, if anything, the agency and Congress need to change to better protect the public.

"We also will examine the feasibility and safety of drug imports, a source so many folks have pinned their hopes on for relief from rising prescription drug prices," Enzi added. "I see it as our duty to direct the Committee to review importation with the goal of understanding if it is reasonable, safe and cost effective to task the FDA with the extensive oversight duties that would be required by allowing imported drugs on a wide scale." Finally, the Committee will review the potential market impact of competition from imported drugs and whether it likely would benefit consumers by lowering prices.

Hearings scheduled for next week, include:

- February 16 at 10 a.m. - The Realities of Safety and Security;  
430 Dirksen Senate Office Building.
- February 17 at 10 a.m. - Drug Importation: Would the Price Be Right?;  
430 Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The series will conclude with additional hearings on March 1, 2 and 3. Topics for the March hearings will be announced at a later date.